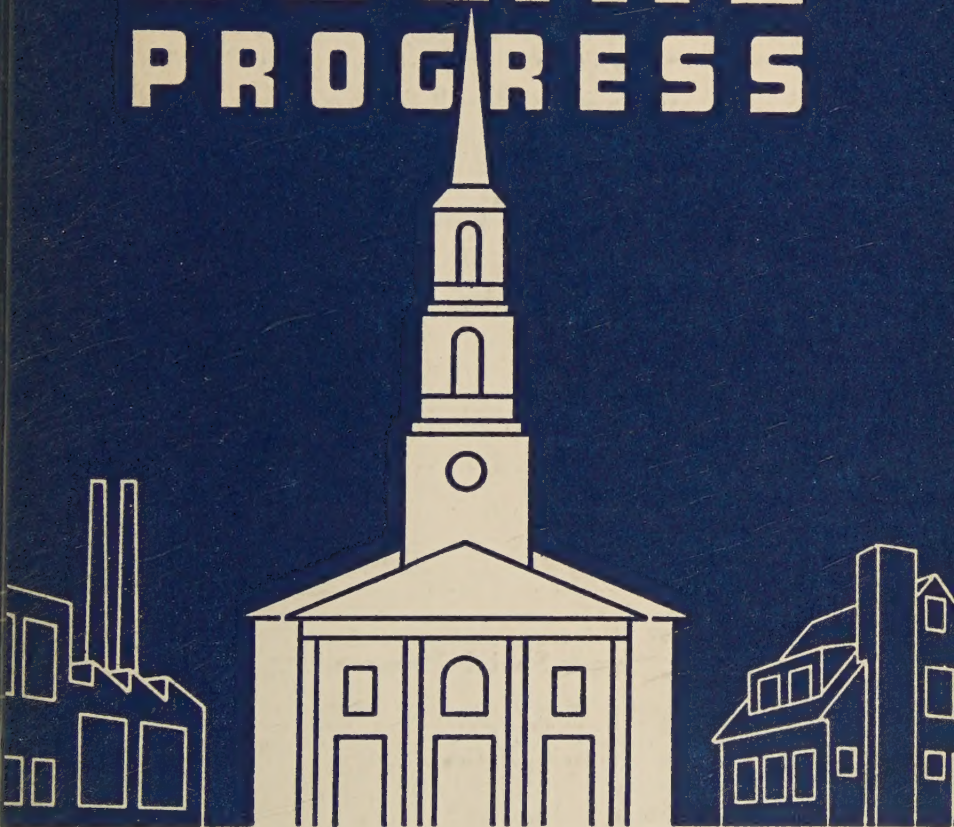


SOCIAL PROGRESS



from Futility to Faith
Disciplines of Peace
War and the Christian

NOVEMBER 1939

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SOCIAL PROGRESS

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No. 4

From Futility to Faith

*By Phillips P. Elliott**

A LARGE part of man's effort is spent in trying to escape the sense of futility. Persuaded now and then of his own importance and value, he is again and again thrown back into a feeling of impotence and ineffectiveness. No one has escaped those times of depression, when with plans foiled and hopes destroyed, we ask ourselves and all the universe, "What's the use?"

This feeling of futility has been immensely deepened with the coming of the new world war. War itself is the great futility, devoid of accomplishment, and it makes all of life seem futile too. Surely during these past weeks none of us has failed to feel again and again the mood of complete despair and of utter powerlessness. How condemned our best efforts are to destruction. We put strength and

money into societies for the upbuilding of life, into child welfare societies, into education for children and young people; we are concerned about proper housing and food, a thousand good causes have commanded our allegiance and support, and now, all this seems but a whistling up the wind as war comes storming down the world's highway and bears destruction to children as well as to their parents and nullifies everything that the altruism of man has devised.

The churches have kept up their work of preaching and serving men's needs; they have talked about good will and the family of men and the kingdom of God on earth, and now these words come back to mock those who uttered them and the human family is no more than an empty dream. "Vanity of vanity, all is vanity." The words of the preacher were never so apropos.

* Minister, First Presbyterian Church, Brooklyn.

Nothing in all the psychological accompaniments of war is harder to throw off than this terrible burden of futility; this old man of the sea that continues to ride us in our despair, and keeps whispering to us with regard to all our fondest hopes and best deeds, "After all, what's the use?"

Now this is not only the problem of a war ridden society, but it has been a problem for many individuals, especially in recent years. Many have been unable to escape the sense of futility in their own lives. Here is a young man, highly trained for some technical career.

There are no positions open, and so he takes a position utterly alien to his interest and background; altogether inferior to his abilities. The weeks become months and the months years and still he does the work for which he is not trained and for which he has nothing but distaste. It is no wonder that bitterness seizes him and he asks of all his training, and of all high pursuits, "After all what's the use?" Indeed all through the period of economic adversity we have seen men blocked in their fondest hopes, the plans of years and the achievements of decades thrown to the ground, and the mood of futility has been strong upon many hearts.

We are helped to an answer to this very common and very troubling problem if we consider another instance when men felt a profound

sense of futility. This was at the close of Jesus' life. An experience glorious beyond all description had come to an end for the disciples. They had expected it to come to an end some time, as all things end, but not in this way; not in a cross, not on Calvary. They expected it to end as all such relationships should end, a natural though sad farewell between teacher and pupils, between Master and disciples. That could have been endured. But not this ruthless severing of the tie; this barbaric stroke like an executioner's axe which within a few hours achieved the arrest, trial, and crucifixion of their Lord. No wonder they were frightened and scattered and in despair. Peter's words "I go a fishing" sum it all up. They are words which express futility as fully as any words in the Bible. It was all in vain; the months of fellowship, the hours of training, the hopes for a kingdom of love, the promises which Jesus had held out of fuller power and richer life. All these things were in vain.

And then the change came. What it was or how it came we do not know and probably never will know. But the fact is that out of that time of futility the Christian church was born; that out of the ashes came the flame, and out of the darkness the light. It was not at Bethlehem that the Christian church was born, nor at Nazareth, nor even on Calvary. It was born at that time and in that

place where the disciples became aware that Jesus was not dead but living; that futility was not the last word, that they could go beyond it and find another word, more basic still, and that word was faith. In the garden where they laid him, or on the road to Emmaus, or in the upper room, or wherever the experience came it had this common factor—futility was done away, no longer was there any question. Now everyone saw that something must be done for him, and that to do it was the most glorious thing in life. And so they went out and across the world to speak and live for him. Redeemed from futility—that was the beginning of the Christian church.

Nor was this experience of the disciples by which they were lifted from futility into usefulness one which they alone possessed. It is an experience which every generation of Christians has to some degree possessed. It is the way by which our generation will find the way out of this blanket of despair, and from this burden of hopelessness. We too must begin again and find the truth that lies beyond tragedy; the peace that lies beyond war; the hope that lies beyond despair.

And we remind ourselves that we see thus far only by the eyes of faith. If we try to walk by the sight of demonstrable facts we will fall. All the evidence of today indicates that nothing is worth-while. Everything is doomed. That can be proved in

a dozen ways, and most surely by the noise of the guns and the dropping of the bombs—the unanswerable argument of war. Yet the last word remains to be said, the last reality to be seen, and seen with the eyes of faith. For faith is “the assurance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.” It is like the resurrection faith, a faith received by the spirit of God within men’s hearts. It is the upsurge of faith coming to rescue them from their own feebleness. It is the assertion of life winning out against death. It is Christian faith in its full vitality.

We are helped to win the way out of our own sense of uselessness therefore, by realizing that Christian faith is always bringing life out of death, is always piercing beyond tragedy to the victory. The resurrection is the token and the assurance of that. But how often we see it. Here is a life so low that no one can touch the man, his heart is hard and closed, his habits are wretched and deep. He is dead spiritually. But beyond that death there is life, and again and again, this very day, the spirit of Christ is touching men, the message of his compassion is redeeming them, and whereas they were dead, now they live. It is true likewise of the life of a community. Think about a normal community and what it would be like if there were no spiritual influences, no churches. Even the real estate men like to advertise that there are churches in a

community. It is because by them a community is changed from death to life; it is given conscience, tone, vitality, and no other influence can do it.

Moreover, we are helped to escape futility as we remind ourselves that goodness has a value for what it is in itself and not only because it helps in building a future good world. It is its own reward. We are always thinking of our deeds in respect to their effect, in respect to what they will ultimately accomplish by way of a better society. This is important, but it is likely to do just what the war has done, to make us forget that even though the end cannot now be attained, yet the small deeds have their own value. Let each good deed stand on its own right, and multiply them as rapidly as possible. Jesus did this without an eye to the effect. His healing of men's bodies, his teaching to their minds and souls were done for the moment; the deed was worth doing now, something which stood by itself as blessed by God. And in our time we shall be helped in throwing off the burden of futility if we just dig in, find those things which are of help to one another, and let the consequences take care of themselves.

And all the while we know that we are building foundations upon which the world will eventually build. The more good will that is stored up in the world's life the further ahead will be the structure of a world of

friendliness and when the strife is over, the sooner will the rebuilding take place. What a chance we in the United States have in this regard.

And finally, we will be lifted above futility by keeping clear before us the vision of what life can be. I doubt if the disciples ever really lost that no matter how great their despair. They could not forget the hours of fellowship, the words of truth, the deeds of love. So we have the vision of what the world might be—and we must hold it fast for unless men hold fast to what might be, that good future will not be established. This is at once our despair and our hope: our despair because it shows how far we must go and how cruelly the war has thwarted this dream and its realization, and our hope because we can still hold to it. No one can deprive us of our dreams—the vision of what the world may be. This will lift off the burden of futility which is heavy upon us.

We need therefore not be conquered by this mood. There is use in life after all. Beyond tragedy there is victory, beyond death life, beyond war peace, beyond hate love. God pity those who have not seen this, who do not have this faith. And as we thank God that by our faith he redeems us from despair and futility, may we pray that we shall be blessed and used by him in the bringing in of the better day and better world which is to be.

Disciplines of Peace

*By M. Willard Lampe**

PEACE, like every other good thing in human relationships, is a product of disciplined character. The Bible speaks of "the peaceable fruits of righteousness." There have been many wise proposals to relieve the tensions of the world, but none of them can be effective without disciplined living—a great deal more of it than the world possesses at the present time.

Admittedly one of the wisest proposals of our time is that the governments of the world, or if the governments are unable, the churches themselves, should assemble a world conference, at which the representatives of each nation should do three things—state their grievances, then their minimum demands, and then their maximum concessions, after which there should be a recess of half a year for general discussion, and then a reassembling to come to terms. It's a great idea, but dependent upon one thing—the willingness of the nations of the world, and especially the privileged nations really to make concessions in the interests of economic justice for all, and who will say that such willingness exists in any generous degree?

Another suggestion is that American women should cease buying silk hosiery, and that American manufacturers should cease selling war materials to Japan. A very convincing argument is presented that this would quickly stop the undeclared war in China, without any increased danger of an American conflict with Japan. Why is this not done? For what other reason, pray, than that we are more interested in our looks and in our pocketbooks than in stopping a far-away war.

Let me take one other illustration not so far from home. In Newton, Iowa, where Maytag washing machines are made, there was a serious strike a year ago. In this strike, as in all labor troubles, there were two sharply opposed sides, each side sincerely believed in by large numbers of people. In Newton there was one minister who believed that what the situation called for was not an unyielding alignment with one side or the other, but a large measure of sympathetic understanding for all concerned, especially for those whom the more prosperous and respectable elements of the community were inclined to condemn. But he lost his job for his pains. There was simply not enough disciplined living in the community to tolerate

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sympathetic understanding in a time of bitter tension.

I would not minimize any sincere effort for peace. We should back the practical crisis-meeting peacemakers, and we should never cease to pray for peace, but we will never get peace without building up the moral controls, the disciplines, the character of human life. Let me state as succinctly as I can, two or three disciplines prerequisite to peace, disciplines that every peacemaker, official or common citizen, should seek to embody in his own training and in the training of his own children and in the youth of each on-coming generation.

The first discipline prerequisite to peace—and we all need more of it—is a belief in its possibility, based upon a deeper faith that the God who rules this world of ours is the God of peace, and that the Master whom we follow is the Prince of Peace. This faith in peace should not be blind to the demonic forces in our world, to the cruelty, perfidy and rapacity of human nature at its worst, but it should see with clear eye the forces that are greater than these. When it is said that war is inevitable, we should know a gospel that is invincible. When we are told that man is and always will be a fighting animal, we should be aware of that within him which may grow unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. The discipline we need is a faith that can overcome the prevail-

ing mood of cynicism and despair.

There are multitudes who see the folly of war, its utter futility, that it creates more problems than it solves, and kills more people than it protects, but who feel that there is no escape from it; that we are caught in a trap, either fatalistically or as the inevitable result of a corrupt and foolish human nature which cannot be changed. To share this mood is to be defeated at the start. A Christian who believes that he knows a gospel which is able to redeem human nature from every demonic influence, and to bring victory over every evil thing should have the deeply rooted faith that war is not inevitable, that enduring peace is possible, and that it is part of the will of God who has revealed himself in Christ. This is not an easy faith. It should not be easy. But I should say that the first prerequisite to peace, the first objective of any program of peace education, is a joyous deeply founded faith in its possibility.

Another discipline prerequisite to peace, and one which brings the matter home to all of us, is the cultivation of an ability to act towards all people with whom we come into contact, with such justice and kindness, that if our conduct were universalized, peace would be automatic and inevitable. One deep-lying cause of war, when the matter is pursued back to its roots, is that we do not regard the people we meet, especially those

who are in any sense different from ourselves, as truly our brothers. We do not judge others by their intrinsic worth, but by some purely accidental or incidental feature of their lives, such as their geographical habitat, the color of their skin, or the amount of their worldly possessions. Let each one honestly ask himself the question, Where is the line about my life beyond which it is impossible or difficult for me to live on friendly terms with others? Is that line drawn around my section of the country, or my religion, or my economic class, or my race, or my nation? It is only when the line is all inclusive that one ceases to be a potential war-maker. To cultivate those qualities which, if universalized, will most assuredly bring peace is educational discipline of the highest significance.

Let me mention one more discipline which all the educational forces of the church ought to nurture and cultivate as a prerequisite to peace. It is the process of making clear to our minds the picture of a unified world, of the humanity above all nations, of the Kingdom of God that transcends all our political divisions, making us keenly feel the tension between every national sovereignty and the sovereignty of God. It is only, I think, when the human race shall feel this tension, this incompatibility between a completely sovereign nation and the sovereignty of one who is God of all the nations,

that we shall be able to overcome all the barriers that now prevent a politically organized and unified world possessing sufficient vitality and strength to secure liberty and justice for all.

Too few of us feel this tension as acutely as we should. This may be due, in part, to the fact that we live in a country whose very constitution conflicts at so few points with conscience and the sovereignty of God, but to see this issue is great training for peace.

In the light of such standards as these, each one of us, on this matter of war or peace, might well consider whether we are a part of the problem or a part of the cure. We are a part of the problem, if we have no faith in the possibility of peace, if we allow prejudices to control us in our attitude toward other people, if we have no higher allegiance than that of loyalty to a sovereign nation. We are a part of the cure if we believe in peace as part of the will and purpose of God, if we try to act towards others as God in Christ has acted towards us all, and if we cultivate the patriotism which seeks first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness. Most of all we are a part of the cure if we teach and practice these things as stern disciplines, "binding them about our necks, writing them upon the tablets of our hearts," and "having our feet shod with this preparation of the Gospel of Peace."

Must the Church Save Itself?

*By Harrison M. Sayre**

“WHOSOEVER would save his life shall lose it,” said the Master. Jesus made no exceptions. The church itself is in danger whenever, in fear or introspectiveness, it seeks to save itself.

For the moment, I say nothing of the hard-pressed churches that are failing to put as much emphasis as they ought on the missionary causes. I have in mind, rather, the greater number of churches that are failing to do as much as they might to further the work of other society-saving institutions.

Perhaps it is asking too much of pastors to expect them to plead for the financing of boys' clubs and settlement houses before the budgets of their own churches have been balanced. But, historically, virtually all social and educational institutions of the modern community are children of the church. Is the church doing all it might to reassert from week to week its parental love and concern? Ought not the church to do its utmost, especially in the present crisis, to direct its man-power into community activities?

Hanging a Community Fund pennant, posting (unsolicited) the meetings of the local Peace Action group,

or cooperating with the local Big Brother Association or Settlement House have important symbolic meaning. The Adult Educational Commission of the Federated Churches of Columbus, Ohio, has gone farther than that through publishing monthly for the past seven years, a Columbus Civic Calendar. This leaflet, listing all the worthwhile social and educational meetings of the city is posted on the bulletin boards of 200 churches and is distributed with the church bulletins in 14 of the larger churches on the first Sunday of each month. With a circulation of 7500 copies, the calendar bears this silent message: “The church is the mother of all worthwhile works in the community; it is zealous for their welfare.”

By helping community organizations, the church can render priceless assistance. Let the church show its pride in these service agencies. Let it seek opportunities to reinforce their work with publicity, man power, even finances, as circumstances permit. Only so can the church resume, in the thinking of modern men and women, the central place it historically deserves among the institutions of a highly organized world.

For the church to save itself, it must be willing to lose its life.

* Educator and president of the *American Education Press*, Columbus, Ohio.

War and the Christian

*By Eugene Carson Blake**

IT WAS a clever question that the emissaries of the chief priests and scribes asked Jesus. They knew then as well as we know today that a clear cut answer on an emotional political issue will lose a man considerable support from the crowd. Jesus, no politician, nevertheless was aware of what these questioners were trying to do in spite of their unctuous compliments. He knew that any answer he could give to their question: "Is it lawful for us to give tribute to Caesar or no?" would alienate some of his followers. "Show me a penny," said Jesus. "Whose image and superscription hath it?" And they answered, "Caesar's." And he said unto them: "Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's, and unto God the things which be God's."

And that answer given under pressure that day has been the principle which Christians ever since have tried to apply to the difficult problems that are ever arising out of the conflict of loyalties to the state and to God. Catholic and Puritan alike fled from comfortable homes and sailed off to suffer hardship in new lands in order to avoid the legal demands of governments

that violated their Christian conscience. Others, unable to escape the dilemma, have suffered martyrdom rather than be disloyal to God, or have obeyed their governments and carried the scars upon their consciences all their days.

Our country was founded as a refuge from this old world conflict; a land where a man could find freedom of conscience under loyalty to a tolerant government. But under any government, issues will arise. Today under threat of impending war, every thoughtful Christian minister is asking himself: "Is patriotism to my country in time of war compatible with my duty to follow Christ? In wartime can I render unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and not also give to Caesar some of the things that belong to God?"

Already the Christian church may be roughly divided into three more or less hostile groups of thinking on this subject. Some are impatient of the whole discussion. They feel that great issues are at stake in Europe now and that the democracies must resist and if need be fight this barbarism before it is too late. Another group believes that war cannot do anything valuable and that it is always our Christian duty

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to stay out of war. Some are convinced pacifists and feel that it is their duty to remain so. Others believe it to be their duty to be loyal citizens in war but will feel that in their patriotism they have been disloyal to God. The third and I suppose the largest group consists of those who are confused about the whole issue. They hate and fear both war and the barbarism that challenges our free democracy. They want to render unto Caesar the things which be Caesar's and unto God the things which be God's but are uncertain *how* it is possible, or even *if* it is possible.

It is these sincere differences of conviction among honest Christian people that pose the question of this article: *What is the duty of the leaders of the Christian church if war comes to our nation?*

In the last war, generally speaking, the churches were loyal and engaged with enthusiasm in war work. Most of the ministers of the churches helped build up morale by ringing denunciations of the barbarities of the Huns, and assertions of the justice of our own cause, and although here and there in the pulpit a tentative appeal for less hatred of the Germans was heard, most such voices were soon silenced by charges of disloyalty and pro-Germanism.

But after the war was over, there came a reaction and a revulsion of feeling. Ministers looked at what they had said and realized that their

sermons and prayers didn't look very Christian now that the hot emotion of the war years had passed. Many ministers publicly retracted their war positions and became pacifists and the few pacifists who had been loyal to their convictions during the war and had suffered for them, became the heroes of the hour. Many felt that the war insofar as it had been idealistic at all had utterly failed, and they declared that it must not happen again.

So the matter stood until three or four years ago. Church leadership was internationally minded and worked sincerely for peace and justice. Today, once more passions are aroused, and individuals who have been urging peace and disarmament are now calling for arms and a stop-Hitler movement. A crusade is in the making. If we go into war again, will it be the whole sad story over again? Or did the church learn something from the last war?

We all know what it means to be loyal to our government, and I believe all of us will be loyal so far as our conscience will allow. But what will it mean to be loyal to God? I suggest four points as a minimum program:

1. *That, in another war the Christian church should take every effort to create an inclusive spirit of tolerance rather than a divisive spirit of suspicion and distrust.* I suggest this point first because I think it is

certain that as we are divided now in our best thinking, so will we be divided then. The Christian thing to do is never a matter of law on which all honest Christians can easily agree. The Christian life is lived when a man attempts to apply the spirit of love and understanding to concrete situations. Because of this recognition of the individual's duty of private judgment, in Protestant churches at least, we may be sure that there will be among us both patriots and pacifists, equally sincere, should the United States be involved in war. I suggest that the church must retain in its activities and worship such a tolerant attitude that during those difficult days the mother whose boy is in danger fighting for his country, and the pacifist, hated as he will be and despised for his convictions everywhere else, may find in the same church, comfort and courage for their souls.

2. *That, in another war the attitude of the church shall be one of penitence for our collective sins that have made the war, rather than an attitude of exultation in participating in a glorious crusade:* that, there shall be no prayers for victory of our armies, but rather prayers for peace, justice, and pardon. Surely it is disloyal to God for the church of Christ which is international to become the partisan pawn of any nation's policy, however nearly right we might judge that nation to be.

3. *That in another war the task of*

the church should be as always to promote understanding and love for all men, even our enemies, rather than to incite hatred for them and a desire for their utter destruction. All of us know that this is the hardest thing to do when war passions are aroused. But we cannot in time of war declare a moratorium on all our ethical convictions and still be loyal to the God who is the Father of Jesus Christ.

4. *Finally, that in another war the church in all its war service activities shall keep paramount the ministering to human needs.* Red Cross bandages, canteen services, sweaters and socks, the rehabilitation of war torn countries and peoples—all these we will want to do; for they are always a part of the church's business—ministering to human need. But we should not sell liberty loans. We should not be recruiting agencies. Caesar must seek his money and his soldiers in another house than God's.

Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's and unto God the things that are God's. It will be a hard thing for the church and the Christian minister to do in time of war. But if it can be done, it will bring closer that day when God shall make wars to cease and peace shall cover the earth. For that light still shines, and it is for us to reflect it, if but with a flickering torch. God grant that we may be faithful even though it be a cross that waits.

*A Little Child**

By Charles J. Turck

RECENTLY Dr. Roswell Barnes, of the Federal Council of Churches, said: "We are beginning to realize, from observation of the experience of other nations, that our cherished heritage of liberty and democracy is insecure unless the rising generation is committed to the Christian principles taught in our Sunday schools. Dictatorships dare not permit independent religious instruction under the church. Democracies must encourage it." What Dr. Barnes has here recognized is the reason for an effort that the churches are now making to reach some of the seventeen millions of young people who are growing up in America without any religious instruction, Jewish, Catholic, or Protestant. This is exactly half of our young people between the ages of five and twenty years. How can we reach this unreached half of tomorrow's citizens?

Our principal effort must be to convince parents that children should be sent to Sunday school. In an attempt to get new evidence of the value of the Sunday school in the lives of noted Americans, I wrote to several. One of the most human

documents I received was a letter from the noted Kansas editor, William Allen White. Because it duplicates the experiences of so many others and because of its whimsical humor, I quote it here in full: "My Christian education consisted of membership in four Sunday schools which I attended fairly regularly every Sunday. I fear there was no compulsion at home to go but my attendance record was kept up by the fact that all the boys and girls in town were there—there was nowhere else to go. From the time I was six years old until I was sixteen I don't suppose I ever missed going to at least two Sunday schools a Sunday, probably three and often I made four, beginning at nine in the morning and ending at half past three in the afternoon. And I learned something most important and at that time it was not morals. I learned to enjoy the King James version of the Bible. I was not smart enough to know that I enjoyed it as literature but I did and all my life the text has been in my mind and quotable at the tip of my tongue. I know of no single element in my education so valuable as Sunday school though through it all I was a hardened little sinner. But I did get a familiarity with the Bible,

* From an address broadcast under auspices of the Sesquicentennial Fund for Christian Education, Monday, July 10, 1939.

and later in life came a keen understanding of its truth, its beauty, and its deep meaning."

What a different America we face today. In Mr. White's day, all the boys and girls in town were in Sunday school. Today, half of them have never been to Sunday school, and the attendance record of the other half is rather poor. We have the task, not only of creating a worthy educational program in our Sunday schools, but of developing social customs and habits that will make it unseemly for Christian parents to waste Sunday morning at home

while their children become better acquainted with the funny papers than they are with the Bible. This is not a problem that requires psychological analysis or statistical proofs. It requires only that parents of children give up the lazy, selfish habits of an idle Sunday morning and take the family with them to Sunday school. I am convinced that the preservation of no other institution is so essential as our Sunday school to American democ-

racy and the creation of a Christian commonwealth.

If we can reestablish the Sunday school in the heart of young America and supplement its work with weekday church schools, we shall be add-

ing such reserves to the moral stamina of America that we need not fear for the future of personal liberty, religious freedom and equal justice for all. American civilization was established by men and women who had great faith in God, who planted a schoolhouse next to every church, and who wrote in the pages of their

A Sunday School Advance

September 1, 1939, marked the beginning of the Presbyterian Sunday School Advance. This two-year effort, sponsored by the Board of Christian Education under General Assembly's recommendation, to improve Presbyterian Sunday Schools, is no mere campaign to add new members, but a renewed emphasis upon more effective Christian education for more persons.

Six specific goals included in the plan approved by General Assembly and definite suggestions for the Advance program are given in PRESBYTERIAN SUNDAY SCHOOL ADVANCE, free at all Presbyterian Book Stores.

primers and readers for their children, precepts of moral purity and grandeur that could not be forgotten although occasionally ignored.

It is fashionable today to ridicule the tools with which our forefathers did their work of Christian education. But one cannot ignore the fact that in the early days, from 1786 to 1825, American school readers had religious emphasis in 50 per cent of their contents, but by 1920, the percentage had dropped to five per cent.

One cannot ignore the fact that in the early years, almost all children had religious instruction in their home or church. Today not one child in four is actually in a Sunday school on the Lord's day. And our crime bill has gone up while our religious emphasis in education has gone down.

In a newspaper recently, there were three leading headlines. One told of the defalcation of the head of a great state university. Another told of alleged shortages in the accounts of a city manager. The third related to the mishandling of trust funds. Something is wrong in America when in a single newspaper, common dishonesty in politics, education, and business constitutes the unsavory revelations of the day.

What is thus strikingly revealed as prevalent wrong comes from a completely mistaken set of values. Such mistakes are easy inside of a mind that has never known the Bible, that has never devoted itself to a continued effort to understand the Christian way of life. But such mistakes are not likely when one has from early childhood sought to know the will of God, has found it in the Ten Commandments and the Golden Rule, and has carried with him in his heart and on his tongue the Shepherd's Psalm, the Beatitudes and the thirteenth chapter of Paul's first letter to the Corinthians. Not that any child can be guaranteed even by his Sunday school experience a career of absolute rectitude

and honor, but that such a child is more likely to press toward the mark of the prize of God's high calling than one who has never learned to hear the call.

I bring this brief plea for our Sunday schools to a close with a tribute sent me by the brilliant young district attorney of the county of New York, Hon. Thomas E. Dewey. If any man in America should know the value of Sunday school and Bible training and the risks to society when young people are deprived of such training or avoid it, that man is Mr. Dewey. And this is what he says: "The Sunday school is an integral part of our educational system. Our public schools do a fine job, but if a truly balanced education is to be achieved, secular training must be supplemented by the religious training which the Sunday school offers. In the Sunday classroom, under the guidance of sympathetic men and women and through the spiritual inspiration of the stories of the Bible, our children acquire knowledge which, blended with the teachings of the home, the church, and public school, equips them with a sense of the real values in life. Such training builds the spiritual strength and moral character with which our country became free and grew great. The Sunday school is one of the surest safeguards of civilization."

Mr. Dewey is right. If we neglect the children, we neglect and defeat the Kingdom of God.

A Litany for These Times

*By John J. Moment**

Our Father,
in the midst of a world distraught,
full of conflict and fear,
of problems beyond our wisdom and tasks beyond our
strength,
we turn to Thee.

**Hear us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and in Thy
mercy grant our petitions. Amen.**

Deliver us from the evils which rage in the earth;
from war and the threat of war,
from the ruthless designs of tyranny and greed,
from the enmity of which strife springs and the darker
enmity which strife engenders.

**Hear us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and in Thy
mercy save the nations. Amen.**

Forgive us the wrongs we have done, wilfully or heedlessly,
the foolish pride and shallow prejudice,
the indifference and selfishness,
wherein lie the roots of discord and which we all share.

**Hear us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and in Thy
mercy pardon our offences. Amen.**

Lead us into a new day of justice and freedom,
of fair and friendly dealings among the peoples and
between every man and his neighbor;
into wider knowledge, deeper reverence, more vital faith;
into a more resolute will to make Thy will prevail in our
own lives and in the life of the world.

**Hear us, O Lord, we beseech Thee, and in Thy
mercy grant us deliverance and pardon and peace.
Amen.**

*O God of love, O King of peace,
Make wars throughout the world to cease;
The wrath of sinful man restrain;
Give peace, O God, give peace again.*

—Presbyterian Tribune
September 14, 1939

* When using this litany in the Crescent Avenue Presbyterian church of Plainfield, Dr. Moment found it effective for the choir to take the amens.

Where Cross the

SOCIAL PROGRESS welcomes most cordially Dr. Paul C. **Dr. Payne** Payne, who on December 1 will become the General Secretary of the Board of Christian Education to succeed the late Dr. Harold McAfee Robinson. Dr. Payne knows the Church well as a pastor and has already received national recognition as a leader in Christian education. At the 1939 General Assembly in Cleveland, he was appointed chairman of the Standing Committee on Christian Education, and was secretary of a committee authorized by the General Assembly of 1937 on the revision of Chapter XXIII of the Presbyterian Confession of Faith. Since 1937, Dr. Payne has been pastor of the Ithaca church, where fifty per cent of his church officers are faculty members of Cornell University and more than fifty per cent of his congregation are students and faculty members. We look forward with confidence to his leadership in every aspect of the program of Christian education.

Federal Council Message The Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America issued on October 8, 1939, "A Call to Our Fellow Christians." The message represents the consensus of judgment which it was possible for sixty representatives of the churches to arrive at after discussing the issues for two days.

"With grieving heart and stricken conscience we confront the fact of war. But we are not in despair. God, whose holy love is declared in Jesus Christ, is not in eclipse except as we have turned from him to walk in our own shadow. He has made us for himself; and, be the night short or long, we shall yet praise him. We call upon the churches to repent. Every land has some share in the common guilt and the Christians in every land have followed their Master only 'afar off.' Penitence is the mood that best becomes us. We must lead the world's contrition if we would minister to the world's tragic need. We call upon the churches to keep and strengthen their world-wide bonds. Despite the cleft and violence of war there is a world-wide Christian family, in which even now, across the chasms of war, men of all nations can realize their kinship in Christ.

"We call upon the churches to defend the liberties of press, platform, and pulpit which war anywhere harshly threatens, and especially to uphold that freedom of conscience without which past martyrdoms are betrayed and victory becomes defeat. We call upon the churches to pronounce war an evil thing alien from the mind of Christ. To those who for conscience's

ded Ways of Life

sake cannot fight, war is anathema. To those who fight for conscience's sake war is still evil, though they believe it an inescapable choice in this present evil world. From the baleful wind of the last war we now reap the whirlwind. Thought and conscience will be cleared if we brand war as evil.

"We call upon the churches now to seek peace, not for safety's sake or for profit's sake but for Christ's sake and a kindlier world. We could not, and would not, be immune from the world's problems and pain. By generous gift and practical service let us know 'the fellowship of his suffering' in war-torn lands. By trenchant thought let us explore the hidden causes of war. With willingness to sacrifice let us join with others in preparing the outlines of a just peace, of an economic life undisfigured by poverty and greed, and of a world order in which the common need and service of all nations may find a home. We call upon the churches now to reaffirm good will when ill will is rife. It is our task now, while resisting hatred, to cleave to the right; while guarding against misleading propaganda, to discern moral issues and to stand for the truth; to dismiss hysteria in the strength of a quiet spirit and, for Christ's sake, who bade us 'love one another,' to refrain from bitter condemnation. We call upon the churches now to make unfailing intercessions. It is our deepest task, our spiritual and creative enterprise, to pray without ceasing in his name who prayed for all men from a cross. So shall the church be his body, the new incarnation of his Spirit among men. 'Hope thou in God, for we shall yet praise him who is the help of our countenance and our God.'"

General Assembly on Peace

The General Assembly of 1938 recognized a unity of purpose and objective among the churches in regard to peace, but a wide diversity of opinion as to the effective means to that end, in this declaration:

"We recognize that on the great objective of peace we are united. On the means by which peace is to be attained we are frequently divided. There are those who believe that peace can only be assured by a policy of complete isolation through neutrality and those who believe that peace can only be assured by complete participation in international action designed to enforce peace through economic and other pressure. Between these two groups are to be found all intermediate gradations of opinion, conscientiously held by Christian people."

The General Assembly of 1939, under the more imminent threat of world

conflict, reaffirmed its position in the following pronouncement:

"We hold that war is a violation of human personality and is repugnant to the Christian conscience, and we repudiate it as a means of settling international disputes. War, wherever it appears, is a manifestation of the power of sin in the world. We would affirm again our faith in the Christian method of overcoming evil and hate by love and the power of the cross.

"In this present situation, the people of the United States have an important responsibility. We must penitently acknowledge our share in the conditions that have brought about the present international tension. We have, therefore, a duty to place the immense prestige and influence which this nation enjoys on the side of peace. We commend our Government for every effort which makes plain to the nations America's will for peace. On the other hand, we believe that every possible step should be taken to safeguard the neutrality of this nation in the event of war abroad. People differ as to the best means of achieving this end. As Christians, we pray for God's guidance in our own thinking and for his guidance of the constituted authorities in the United States, in order that our nation be not drawn into the maelstrom of foreign strife. We urge the passage of legislation without further delay that will forbid the shipment of arms and munitions and all material of war to any nation that crosses the territorial boundaries of any other nation; or that employs its armed forces to drop bombs on the civilian population of its enemy.

**If There
Be War** The most unusual if not wholly encouraging aspect of the present situation in Europe is the half-hearted prosecution of the war and the eager longing for peace so clearly manifested by the peoples of warring and neutral nations alike. Mankind seems to be coming belatedly to a realization of the unmitigated idiocy and futility of war. Hopeful as this may be for some settlement through conference and agreement, the suspense has tightened the nerves of our people as well as those of other countries, and war news and comment dominates the press and radio. Tension is evident in the attitudes of ministers and people in the churches. Uncertainty and apprehension as to the position which the church and individual Christians can or should take has been expressed in many letters received during the past weeks. For this reason, we bring to the readers of *SOCIAL PROGRESS* in this issue the thought and suggestions of their fellow Christians on this perplexing situation. Let us together embrace with confidence our responsibility and our opportunity as the children of the Father and the ambassadors of Christ in a troubled and groping world.

News Briefs

NEW YORK—Business may be losing money; war may be waiting around any man's corner; things may look bad in a thousand directions, but they look good in one: church membership is up. Organized religious bodies in the United States have gained almost a million during the past year, according to the 1939 edition of the Yearbook of American Churches, just off the press. The 1939 record shows an inclusive church membership of 64,159,248 as against a previous total of 63,243,843, a gain of 915,414. An increase in churches is also reported.

NEW YORK—The need for the continuation and expansion of weekday religious school centers "to promote the moral and religious welfare of the children of our city" was emphasized by Dr. Rufus M. Hartill, president of the Protestant Teachers Association, in an address at a conference of church workers, parents and clergymen in the Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church. The conference, which brought together representatives of churches in all parts of the city, had for its theme "The Task of the Christian Community in the Modern World." Dr. Hartill, who also is district superintendent of public schools in Harlem, referring to school religious centers, warned that "unless we perpetuate these centers after school hours, unless we help our children to find their way home spiritually we not only won't have weekday school centers, we won't have Sunday schools either." Rev. A. J. Muste, director of the Presbyterian Labor Temple, declared that in time of war the church must preserve honesty and standards of truth and justice.

INDIANAPOLIS—War propaganda presented from the pulpit "as a holy crusade" is opposed by the presbytery of Indianapolis.

Guaranties of religious and citizenship rights for conscientious objectors are favored by the governing body. War was described by the presbytery as being "repugnant to the Christian conscience, a manifestation of the power of sin in the world, and we repudiate it as a means of settling international disputes. We would affirm again our faith in the Christian method of overcoming evil and hate by love and the power of the Cross."

The action was taken in a special called meeting of the presbytery. The group unanimously adopted part of a report framed in Switzerland in July by a special committee of the World Council of Churches outlining the task of the churches in time of war.

PRINCETON—A band of Princeton undergraduates, strongly of the conviction that the United States should keep out of war, has organized as "The American Independence League." The league already has issued membership cards to 400 students. The membership card explains that "the American Independence League is dedicated to the purpose of revealing, strengthening and expressing the determination of the American people to keep out of the European war."

PHILADELPHIA—Dr. Sam Higginbottom, the moderator of the General Assembly, in a recent letter to the Church Committee for China Relief states: "If there were ever a situation which called upon American Christians to be generous and obedient to their Lord's commands, it is the present one in China . . . and anything Christian America does to help her will long be remembered by the Chinese." The committee (105 East 22d Street, New York) has prepared a Chinese-illustrated postcard, offered at a minimum charge and

bearing the following message: "My Christmas gift to you this year, in remembrance of the Christ-child, is being sent to China to rehabilitate a destitute child for — months." Each dollar sent in, the committee says, "will keep a Chinese child alive for four weeks."

WASHINGTON, PA.—According to President Ralph C. Hutchison, Washington and Jefferson College has started studies of the "second world war" designed to help prevent the "mass hysteria" which characterized the conflict of 1914-18. Dr. Hutchison expresses the belief that Washington and Jefferson is the first college to offer such studies "to help this generation understand better than did their fathers when they entered the first world war."

MILWAUKEE—The International Goodwill Congress scheduled to meet in Milwaukee Nov. 10-13, and long prepared for by the World Alliance for International Friendship Through the Churches and by the Church Peace Union, has been postponed because of the war.

NEW YORK—Christian work for thousands of migrant families, such as the family described in the "best-seller" novel "Grapes of Wrath," is being carried on by the Council of Women for Home Missions at 56 centers in 14 states. The Council (297 Fourth Avenue, New York) announces that it has prepared a "migrant luncheon set" which indicates the states referred to and the crops gathered by the workers.

BUFFALO—After adjourning for a week that its members might meditate upon their convictions with reference to war, Buffalo-Niagara Presbytery reconvened to adopt a resolution urging the Presbyterian Church at large to enact legislation to permit its members to exercise the right of freedom of conscience in refraining from participation in war. "We hold," said the

resolution, "that God alone is Lord of the conscience and believe that we as Christians must support the right of all to the exercise of individual conscience and judgment in all matters including war and peace."

NASHVILLE, TENN.—Nashville Presbytery has approved an overture to the General Assembly for a revision of Article XXIII of the Westminster Confession of Faith, which declares that "Christians may lawfully, under the New Testament, wage war upon just and necessary occasion." The overture proposed will ask the General Assembly that the Article be revised in order that the "conscientious objector" may refuse to go to war and in doing so may have the sanction of his church.

TENNESSEE—Cumberland Mountain Presbytery at its meeting on Sept. 4-5, sent a resolution to the President of the United States commending him on his neutrality stand for this country. The presbytery also voted to overture the General Assembly for a resubmission of Chapter XXIII of the Confession of Faith.

COLUMBUS, OHIO—Ministers' forums on world peace are being sponsored in 60 Ohio counties by the Ohio Council of Churches, Nov. 6-10. Christian and Jewish leaders are cooperating to carry to the people of the churches, through pastors, a call to active service for peace. These county-wide ministerial forums are to be followed in December by laymen's forums led by pastors in local churches.

PONCA CITY, OKLA.—The Oxford Adult Bible Class of the First Presbyterian church has adopted resolutions expressing the unanimous agreement "that war is futile and that we should not become parties to the belief that another world war is inevitable." The group further agreed "that we as a nation should continue to pursue the good neighbor policy

and that we should seek a spirit of tolerance in viewing the problems of other nations, all with the purpose of keeping a Christian sanity and behavior during a period when hatreds and misunderstandings seem to pervade the entire world."

News from Abroad

MANCHESTER, ENGLAND—Canon Stuart Morris, head of the Peace Pledge Union, announced at a meeting of the union that he was renouncing his orders in the Anglican Church as a protest against the attitude of "a great part of the Church of England towards the European war." "Even if our cause had been the most just of causes," he said, "it remains true that no cause, however righteous, can possibly be achieved by a resort to violence and a denial of all that we mean by righteousness." Mr. Morris became head of the Peace Pledge Union a year and a half ago on the death of its founder, the Rev. Dick Sheppard.

LONDON—H. G. Wells, in a letter to the *Times*, declared that if the world persists in "the present regime of vague insincerities, mutual distrust and sabotage, I for one can see no hope for mankind." Asserting only a "full and fearless public intercourse of minds" can achieve the state of "world-wide plenty and safety we have every reason to suppose is obtainable," the author asked: "Cannot our western world, in its quite inevitable march toward world collectivism, face its changes in the light—in an atmosphere of extreme candor and mutual toleration?"

Wells declared: "The thing I am most terrified by today is the manifest threat of a new weak putoff of our aspirations for a new world by some repetition of the Geneva simulacrum. The last time," he said, "it was the League of Nations; this time the magic word to do the trick is a federation. A real League of Nations might have turned the world into a new course in 1918-19; a real federation of

mankind might do as much tomorrow. But if it is to be a really effective federation . . . we must discuss simply and sincerely plans for a polite mediatization of monarchies, socialization of natural resources and staple industries, world revision and extension of universities and other knowledge organizations, and establishment of a world-wide, rising level of common education."

Correction—The June issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS carried a news item quoting Mohandas K. Gandhi's position on the war against Germany. Unfortunately, the printed quotation was incomplete. In re-printing the item, the omitted sentences are in italics.

BOMBAY, INDIA—Mohandas K. Gandhi said today that "if ever there could be a justifiable war in the name of humanity, a war against Germany—to prevent the wanton persecution of a whole race—would be completely justified. *But I do not believe in any war. A discussion of the pros and cons of such war is therefore outside my horizon or province.*"

ROME—Great developments in Addis Ababa this year were described in a report to Premier Mussolini by Carlo Boidi, First Podesta of the Ethiopian capital. According to Signor Boidi, many schools, government buildings, hospitals, habitations for Italians and natives, markets, sewers, and new streets have been built or are in the course of construction. Private initiative has been most active, he said, and a whole new native quarter is under construction. This is the sort of thing, incidentally, that fills the greater part of Italian newspapers these days. There are accounts of progress in constructing the new town of Carbonia in Sardinia, preparations for commencing the vast project of breaking up the big Sicilian estates, progress and plans for developing Albania. The European war takes a secondary place.

Quotes

There are two kinds of fools. One says, "This is old, therefore it is good"; the other says, "This is new; therefore it is better."—*Dean Inge.*

The need of the world today is not so much for more Christians, but for better Christians, for Christians that are filled with the Spirit.—*M. A. Cooper.*

There is no such thing as an inevitable war. If war comes it will be from failure of human wisdom.—*Bonar Law.*

War gratifies, or used to gratify, the combative instinct of mankind, but it gratifies also the love of plunder, destruction, cruel discipline, and arbitrary power.—*C. W. Eliot.*

To discover a system for the avoidance of war is a vital need of our civilization; but no such system has a chance while men are so unhappy that mutual extermination seems to them less dreadful than continued endurance of the light of day.—*Bertrand Russell in The Conquest of Happiness.*

We demand that big business give people a square deal; in return we must insist that when any one engaged in big business honestly endeavors to do right, he shall himself be given a square deal.—*Theodore Roosevelt.*

The modern democratic system of government is, morally and politically, the highest system of government which humanity has achieved through the evolution of several thousands of years.—*Eduard Benes.*

What youth needs is not to be talked to, or preached to, or to be shushed, or amused, coddled, or supported, but to be admitted into a working partnership with

adults.—*Sanford Bates, executive director, Boys Clubs of America.*

The values of civilization are in urgent need of appraisal. Material values, in particular, need downward revision. They exert a power markedly in excess of actual values and there is danger that real values may be bludgeoned into insensibility by materialistic impacts.—*Edward Adam Strecker, University of Pennsylvania.*

The only way in which we can ever hope to bring about a happier state of human affairs is by doing so first of all within our bailiwick. If each one of us will take care of his own particular front yard, then we shall have a pleasant village in which to live; and a world full of pleasant villages would be a pretty decent one for most everybody.—*Hendrik Willem van Loon.*

The world has not yet recovered from the effects of the last carnage, which in each and every country decimated my generation. The greatest success that any government could achieve for its own national policy would be nothing in comparison with the triumph of having contributed to save humanity from the terrible fate which threatens it today.—*The Duke of Windsor.*

Found on a crumpled piece of paper on one of the benches in City Hall Park, New York City:

To a Nine-Inch Gun

Whether your shell hits the target or not
Your cost is five hundred dollars a shot,
You thing of noise and flame and power
We feed you a hundred barrels of flour
Each time you roar. Your flame is fed
With twenty thousand loaves of bread.
Silence! A million hungry men
Seek bread to fill their mouths again!

Book Reviews

Designs in Scarlet, by Courtney Ryley Cooper. Little Brown & Co., Boston, 1939. \$2.75.

The investigation reported in this deeply disturbing book began with a letter. Written on good stationery, the language bespoke education, and the penmanship was of a style characteristic of many college girls. The writer was by her own admission "a prostitute, young, clean, healthy," and "just as keen as other girls about sports and other conventional good times." Director J. Edgar Hoover, of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, to whom it was addressed, handed the letter to Mr. Cooper. "Do you notice," he said, "that nowhere is there even a mention of the question of morals? The job pays well; that's enough." After a pause, he continued, "I wish I were a reporter; I would take a year off and write the story of what makes all this possible." Ryley Cooper himself took the year off and tells in this book the shocking and sordid story revealed in what he describes as one of the most intricate and difficult jobs of reporting which he has ever encountered. His extensive inquiry included not only cities but towns and villages and covered the hotels, the "dine and dance" road-houses, the tourist camps, barrooms and other equally vicious resorts. Two statements are repeated many times by this writer: First, the young people concerned in this tragic situation come from every strata of our social life; second, the police authorities often seem to be more deeply concerned than the parents of the young people themselves.

The book is disturbing and depressing to any reader. It will be particularly shocking to parents of young people because of its revelations and implications. It is true that many of the cases are abnormal and will be quite properly dis-

counted for that reason. But no thinking person can or will carelessly disregard this book, the report of a skillful investigator and an eye witness, its claims supported by the testimony of educators, judges, police, federal agents, newspaper men, and members of the underworld itself.—E. G. R.

Why Be Good? by James Reid. Cokesbury Press, 1939. \$1.50.

Is It Right or Wrong? by Nolan B. Harmon, Jr. Cokesbury, 1938. \$1.50.

These two books in the field of Christian ethics form an interesting contrast. Dr. Reid, an English pastor recently moderator of the Presbyterian Church in England, has presented Christian moral principles in their application to modern living. Dr. Harmon, Methodist clergyman and author, has faced great numbers of specific moral problems and clearly stated what he regards as the Christian answer.

Best Sellers

Fiction

Grapes of Wrath, by John Steinbeck, Viking Press.

Escape, by Ethel Vance, Little, Brown & Company.

Children of God, by Vardis Fisher, Harper & Brothers.

Watch for the Dawn, by Stuart Cloethe, Houghton, Mifflin Company.

Christ in Concrete, by Pietro di Donato, Bobbs-Merrill Company.

General

Country Lawyer, by Bellamy Partridge, Whittlesey House.

Inside Asia, by John Gunther, Harper and Brothers.

Not Peace but a Sword, Vincent Sheean, Doubleday, Doran Company.

Days of Our Years, by Pierre van Paassen, Hillman-Curl.

Reaching for the Stars, by Nora Waln, Little, Brown & Company.

(A consensus of opinion—not a guarantee, nor a recommendation.)

Dr. Reid is more general and Dr. Harmon more concrete. Dr. Reid states principles; Dr. Harmon invokes specific rules. Dr. Reid is more philosophical, Dr. Harmon is more practical. One does not have to choose between these two books, both excellently written with their conclusions fairly and reasonably presented, but to a follower of John Calvin, Dr. Reid's presentation is the more acceptable.

Why Be Good? attempts to "put into simple language the basis on which the claims of morality rest." Dr. Reid at the outset points out that the theory that we can do as we like is an illusion, impossible in a complicated civilization unless we restrict the liberty of others. It is true that we must fulfil our nature, but this requires that we find out what our true nature is. Man is not merely a refined animal. He can think and he has a conscience. He lives in a moral world, at the center of which is God. The compelling power of moral ideals is derived from God and embodied in Christ. The answer to the question "Why be good?" is found by the Christian in the authority of Jesus to whom in sincerity the Christian yields his life.

Dr. Harmon, in *Is It Right or Wrong?* discusses such matters as Sunday amusements, marriage and divorce, gambling, the Christian's duty to the state, and the right of private property. A most interesting section concerns the Christian's attitude toward war. Dr. Harmon states that on the basis of an other-worldly hope we can comprehend the attitude the early Christians took toward government and war. The Christian would pity the ruffian and the victim, in peace or in war, but he would not intervene. This was not his world. It was not going to last long enough for him to do much to improve it. But modern Christians do not accept this philosophy. The present day attitude expresses itself in Christian participation in government and in the cure of social wrongs within the community and may

logically sanction Christian activity in the prevention or redress of international wrongs. On this and many other matters, Dr. Harmon is original, thought-provoking and fair.—C. J. T.

It Is Later Than You Think, by Max Lerner. Viking Press, New York, 1938. \$2.50.

This brilliantly written book deserves to be re-read now with the tragic collapse of European civilization in one's mind. The survival of democracy cannot be taken for granted. The left is in retreat. "The great political task of our generation," according to Mr. Lerner, "is the task of giving economic content to democracy and of keeping power in a collectivism from becoming tyrannical." That task is made infinitely more difficult by the fact that the war which Mr. Lerner prophesied has now come, with the fascists unified and prepared and the democracies divided and apparently uncertain how they should resist the new and unexpected Russo-German threat against freedom. Is democracy therefore a lost cause? Not if the people of America will use the tools and the knowledge which they have to create a genuine democracy, controlling the forces of economic disintegration and maintaining at all costs democratic procedures and attitudes. The author is specific, realistic, and stirring in his discussion of what believers in democracy must do. Their task is not hopeless, but they must act now, for it is later than they think.—C. J. T.

Which Way America? by Lyman Bryson. Macmillan, New York, 1939. 60 cents.

It is a commonplace to say that Communism, Fascism, and Democracy are struggling for supremacy in the world today. Each is striving through every sort of propaganda to win the support and approval of the American people and the average man and woman, bombarded by

propaganda on every side, are confused and uncertain as to the facts behind the conflicting claims of these rival political ideologies. It is the purpose of this little book, one of the *People's Library Series*, to help this average citizen to understand the principles which underlie these conflicting philosophies and the goals toward which they are striving. Mr. Bryson's style is clear and direct with the conversational quality for which he is known in the classroom and on the radio. Frankly in favor of democracy, himself, the writer presents with admirable fairness the communism of Russia, the fascism of Italy and Germany, and the democracy of the United States. He makes unmistakably clear to his readers the distinctive characteristics of each political system and the advantages and limitations which accrue to the people living under it. Mr. Bryson is professor of adult education in Teachers College of Columbia University and is the director of the radio program, "The People's Platform."—E. G. R.

Christ in Concrete, by Pietro di Donato. Bobbs-Merrill Company, Indianapolis, 1939. \$2.50.

The September selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club, *Christ in Concrete*, is the sensational first-novel by Pietro di Donato, a young Italian-American bricklayer. It is a story of men who work with brick and mortar, endlessly toiling, brick upon brick as the walls of a skyscraper rise above the city's streets. It is the story of working men's families, tenement dwellers near one of New York's waterfronts; the story of a struggle for existence, of thwarted dreams of men and women who left the homeland seeking fortune in America, the land of dreams. In a sense it is an autobiography for the young bricklayer-author has been plying his trade since he was twelve years old.

Upon the death of his father in the crashing of a wall, young Paul assumes the responsibility of providing for the

family of eight. At fifteen he has become an expert bricklayer. He has fought the suffering of fatigue in a young body straining to do a man's job. He has experienced the rule of bosses who would exploit his youth and cheat him out of that which is his due. He learns that "job" is the supreme ruler in a heartless world. The squalor of tenement life burns deeply into his soul, but he pushes on and on toward a more hopeful world about which he knows very little but hopes some day to see. The climax comes when the young life breaks under the strain of physical labor and to Paul comes the awakening of an anguished mind as in delirium he hears his father exclaim: "I was cheated, my children also will be crushed and cheated. . . . Not even death can free us, for we are . . . Christ in concrete."

The author's style is almost crude in its realism, but its bare truth stands out as the compelling motive. It is a heart-stirring novel of our day, of things that happen in a Christian land.—M. I. W.

Religious Resources for Personal Living and Social Action, by Kirby Page. Farrar & Rinehart, New York, 1939. \$2.00.

Dr. Page begins with this statement: "Personal religion and social reconstruction alike are imperatively required in this hour of crisis. It is not enough to convert individuals; it is not sufficient to change the structure of society; both are indispensable." The failure to realize this self-evident fact presents us "with the spectacle of personal evangelists and social reconstructionists running up and down parallel tracks without meeting."

This is the thesis of Kirby Page's book. It is arranged in four parts. The first section deals with seven aspects of this problem of the concern of the individual with the needs of society and with the maintenance of his own spiritual life, presenting a program and discipline which the Christian may follow in coping with it. Part

two is an anthology of verse and prose and prayers on seven themes, relevant daily readings for fourteen weeks. The third part presents discussion outlines for a period of fourteen weeks suitable for discussion groups, forums, and classes. The final section includes a wealth of worship material which will be invaluable to ministers and other leaders of worship.

Those who already know and admire Dr. Page will read with reminiscent satisfaction the first chapters of this book written in his usual forthright style, seasoned and enriched with poetry and inspirational materials from many sources. It is the writer's wish that this book may provide not only inspiration and guidance for study groups in many church organizations but that it may encourage and guide fellowship groups meeting in homes for weekly discussion and worship.—E. G. R.

The Art of Conducting Public Worship, by A. W. Palmer. Macmillan, New York, 1939. \$2.50.

There is quite evident today a renewed interest in worship just as there is a return to deeper theological thinking. Perhaps the two are complementary. In any case, this book by the president of Chicago Theological Seminary (Congregational) attempts to reconsider the basic elements of worship with a view to making church services more artistic in the best sense of that word. The author is in no sense a ritualist and he advocates no return to a strict liturgy, but he is convinced that in many churches today worship has ceased to be effective. The causes of this deplorable situation and suggested remedies make up the body of the book. Ministers and church executives as they read this timely volume, will surely be made conscious of the art of worship.—H. T. K., Jr.

The Complete Bible, an American translation by J. M. Powis Smith and Edgar J. Goodspeed. University of Chicago Press, 1939. \$3.00.

Modern language translations now occupy an important place in the study of the Bible. The Smith-Goodspeed version is a valuable addition to this series bringing to the reader a fresh insight into the great messages of the Old and New Testament, couched in the familiar language of our own day.

This volume is noteworthy also for the inclusion of the Apocrypha. Although from the earliest Christian times to the age of the King James Version these writings occupied a recognized position in the Scriptures, they are little known among Christians today. The Apocrypha is therefore included in this volume because they are an historical and cultural link between the Old and New Testaments—indispensable to a full understanding and appreciation of the New Testament message. The first edition of the Goodspeed translation has won recognition because of its scholarship and its simple and direct language, a reputation amply maintained by this new translation.—E. G. R.

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Radio, Music and Drama

America's Town Meeting of the Air directed by George V. Denny, Jr., and heard over the NBC-Blue Network, 9:30 to 10:30 p.m. EST, Thursdays, is attracting wide attention. It is reported that more than 1,400 listening groups in homes, halls, schools, and churches gather regularly to listen and to continue their own discussions after the conclusion of the broadcast. Handbooks and other discussion aids have been made available for the use of organized groups.

Dr. Edward Howard Griggs, distinguished lecturer, has returned to the NBC-Red Network in a new series titled "Torch of Progress." During these broadcasts heard Fridays at 6:00 p.m. EST, Dr. Griggs retraces the march of civilization from primitive times to the present. He does not discuss wars, conquests, and rulers but the cultures of successive epochs of mankind.

Dr. William Hiram Foulkes, pastor of the Old First Presbyterian Church, Newark, N. J., on Nov. 1, resumes his "Homespun" broadcasts, Wednesdays at 12:30 p.m. EST, over the NBC-Red Network. The homely philosophy and simple Christian truth that have characterized Dr. Foulkes' discussions since he first came to the microphone seven years ago will be embodied in the forthcoming series.

The International Council of Religious Education (203 N. Wabash Ave., Chicago, Ill.,) has prepared scripts for local radio presentations under the title, "The Nor-tons of First Church." The purpose of these programs is to encourage the use of local radio facilities in bringing to the attention of parents and church leaders a few fundamental problems and suggesting some sources of help.

A milestone in the history of American Protestantism was attained recently on the conclusion of an expedition into Africa where a series of motion pictures had been taken, bringing home to America a record of foreign missions in Africa of a scope and vividness never before attempted. The Africa Motion Picture Project was sponsored by a group of Protestant churches including the Presbyterian Church.

Two films from the Africa expedition suggested for Men and Missions Sunday, Nov. 19, are "Song after Sorrow," a story of leper activities at Biganga Camp in Belgian Congo, and "The Story of Bamba," a dramatization of medical mission training in the Congo. "Padre Sahib," a story of India, and "Good News," a story of missions around the world, are also suggested. (The Harmon Foundation, 140 Nassau St., New York City.)

Plays and pageants for Stewardship Enrollment Sunday, Nov. 19, available at all Presbyterian Book Stores are: An Alabaster Cruse, The Party Dress; Which of These Three? and The Second Mile, a series of two plays under one cover, "Stewardship for Today," and Such As I Have.

For Universal Bible Sunday, Dec. 10, we suggest: Life of William Tindale, four reel English sound film, and Events in the Life of St. Paul, including (one reel) On the Road to Damascus, (two reels) The Way of Salvation, (two reels) Faith Triumphant, a 16mm. English sound film. (Harmon Foundation, 140 Nassau Street, New York.)

Current Films

These estimates of current films are offered in response to the action of the General Assembly, 1932, requesting such a previewing service to be made available from the Department of Social Education and Action. The following evaluations are based on reports of the West and East Coast Preview Committees, cooperating with the Greater Federation of Women's Clubs.

Drums Along the Mohawk (20th Century-Fox) (Henry Fonda, Claudette Colbert, Edna May Oliver, John Carradine, Dorris Bowdon) A Technicolor version of Walter Edmonds' thrilling book dealing with early Colonial history. **Family.**

The Great Commandment (Cathedral Films) (John Beal, Maurice Moscovitch, Albert Dekker) This striking film telling the story of the crucifixion is an interesting experiment in the filming of a biblical subject. Rev. James K. Friederich, a Christian minister, who is the sponsor of the production, was motivated by the desire to present religious history on the screen in so dramatic yet realistic a form that it would compete favorably with secular feature productions. The film has a supplementary love story which tends to hold the interest of patrons, but the stress throughout is upon the spirituality of Christ's teaching. **Family.**

Meet Dr. Christian (RKO Radio) (Jean Hersholt, Patsy Lee Parsons, Dorothy Lovett) Meet Dr. Christian brings the well beloved radio character created by Jean Hersholt to the screen. In it Hersholt repeats his characterization of the small town family doctor, likable, stubborn, but sympathetic and understanding. **Family.**

Fifth Avenue Girl (RKO Radio) (Ginger Rogers, Walter Connolly, Verree Teasdale, James Ellison, Tim Holt) Light satirical comedy that pokes kindly fun, in an exaggerated manner, at the rich and those who envy them. A lonely man confides to a park-bench acquaintance that to his extravagant wife, his too modern daughter, and his arrogant ne'er-do-well son, he is just a fountain of gold. Together they conceive a plan to humanize the family, including the servants. **Adults.**

Five Little Peppers and How They Grew (Columbia) (Edith Fellows, Clarence Kolb, Dorothy Peterson, Ronald Sinclair, Dorothy Ann Seece) A pleasant, honey little comedy, very naturally enacted by a group of young actors. Amusing domestic incidents and much comforting hokum make this film pleasing to general audiences. **Family.**

Honeymoon in Bali (Paramount) (Fred MacMurray, Madeleine Carroll, Allan Jones, Akim Tamiroff, Helen Broderick) Exhilarating, sophisticated social comedy enlivened with gay, clever dialogue. A successful, attractive woman executive finds great satisfaction in her work and in the calm devotion of an opera singer until a stranger from far away Bali upsets her emotional control. There is so much truth in the underlying theme and it is so intelligently and lightly treated that one does not feel it betrays the "screener" woman. Tiny Carolyn Lee adds a refreshing note to the picture. **Adults.**

The Rains Came (20th Century-Fox) (Myrna Loy, George Brent, Tyrone Power, Brenda Joyce, Nigel Bruce, Maria Ouspenskaya) A lavishly spectacular social drama of regeneration in which a varied assortment of men and women, with their petty human affairs and weaknesses, become the pawns of cataclysmic action of flood, earthquake, and cholera in India. **Adults.**

The Star Maker (Paramount) (Bing Crosby, Louise Campbell, Linda Ware, Ned Sparks, Laura Hope Crews) This singing cavalcade of show business is a dramatization of incidents in the life of Gus Edwards, veteran showman and composer of old-time song hits. The new singing discovery, Linda Ware, has a lovely voice and winsome personality. The music of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra, led by Walter Damrosch, and the solo singing of Tschaiikowsky's "Waltz of the Flowers" are very beautiful. **Family.**

The Underpup (Universal) (Robert Cummings, Nan Grey, Gloria Jean, Beulah Bondi, Virginia Weidler, C. Aubrey Smith) A delightful and constructive film, full of tears and laughter. A small girl from the slums, reared with love and understanding, gives a new viewpoint to a swanky girls' club whose members come from wealthy, snobbish families. Gloria Jean has a phenomenal coloratura voice, as well as unusual acting ability; Virginia Weidler also deserves special mention. **Family.**

Reference Materials

✓ Check Your Program—for Social Education and Action

Peace and War. We remind you of the following materials published by the Department of Social Education and Action. Descriptions will be found in *SOCIAL PROGRESS* for October and in the leaflet "Check Your List of Tools for Social Education and Action." Please order from any Presbyterian Book Store listed on the back cover.

"Not by Might," a worship service. *\$1.00 a hundred*

America—What Now?—For reading and study. *10 cents*

Peace in These Times, a discussion guide. *25 cents*

Can We Abolish War? and **Our Martial Mythology.** Leaflets for distribution, *50 cents a hundred.*

A Call to Our Fellow Christians. A message on the relation of the American Churches to the war. For text, see page 16. Available for distribution in the Churches on Armistice Sunday. *The Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York, N. Y., \$1.00 a hundred, \$7.00 a thousand.*

The Churches and the International Crisis. A memorandum prepared by the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches. Order from the *Federal Council of Churches (address above).* *10 cents each, \$1.00 for 15 copies.*

The War, the United States, and the Christian Churches, "Information Service," Sept. 30, 1939. A discussion of significant factors in the European situation, their influence on this country, and their import for Christian thinking. *Federal Council of Churches (address above)* *10 cents.*

Current Aspect of Race. A packet containing a discussion outline, program suggestions, and selected materials for group study and action on the problem of Anti-Semitism in America. *Federal Council of Churches (address above)* *35 cents.*

The War Comes. The October issue of "Propaganda Analysis" examines the propaganda campaign at the outbreak of war in Europe. A worksheet for study is included. *Institute for Propaganda Analysis, 40 East 49th Street, New York. Single copy 20 cents; subscription \$2.00 a year.*

Will Neutrality Keep U. S. Out of War? A Foreign Policy report by William Stone. A valuable analysis of current neutrality legislation. *Foreign Policy Association, 8 West 40th Street, New York. 25 cents.*

Human Dynamite: The Story of Europe's Minorities. A headline book, by Henry C. Wolfe. A popular survey of the pressing minority problem in Europe. *Foreign Policy Association (address above), 25 cents. Leader's Study Packet, 25 cents.*

Schools: The Challenge of Democracy to Education. The second in the "Calling America" series. An examination of "the fountainhead of democracy," the schools. *Survey Associates, Inc., 112 E. 19th Street, New York. 40 cents.*

An American Answer to Intolerance. A teacher's manual prepared in experimental form for use with Junior and Senior High School groups. Four approaches to the problem are outlined: Recognition of Prejudice; Study of Propaganda Devices; Reaffirmation of American Ideals; Accurate Knowledge in Propaganda Domains. Specific procedures are suggested, and a list of plays and a classified bibliography are appended. May be secured by teachers from the *Council Against Intolerance in America, Lincoln Building, New York.*

Family Life. A study of the American family, its home life, relationships, problems, and responsibilities. The packet includes a study outline and excellent source material. *Council for Social Action, 289 Fourth Avenue, New York. 35 cents.*

Christian Education Materials

Mobilizing for Christian Education, gives an answer to the challenge which comes to the church from today's secularized and pagan world. That Christian leadership is needed today when threats of war, the rising tide of intolerance, poverty, crime, and intemperance are the problems that confront civilization, and that Christian education only can supply such leadership is the two-fold message of this leaflet, prepared for general distribution to church members in connection with a presentation of Christian education. Forcefully written, cleverly illustrated, the leaflet is one which should be read now by every Presbyterian. *Free at all Presbyterian Book Stores.*

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S. E. A. Bulletin

War and Peace—The news columns of this issue report the actions of a number of presbyteries which reflect the concern as to the position of the churches in a period of war. It is gratifying to hear of the leadership of the Committee on Social Education and Action in many presbyteries at this trying time. Sending in the news item on the action of Indianapolis Presbytery, Chairman Henry Edwards Chace said: "The presbytery met in a pro-re-nata meeting called at the request of its Committee on Social Education and Action. The afternoon was spent in a consideration of the statement of the Provisional Committee of the World Council of Churches, 'The Churches in a World at War.'* What prebytery did was to adopt Section III of the statement as its position relative to war. Presbytery's committee felt that it was imperative for the Church to establish a base line for Christian thinking now, before war hysteria, or even more, 'M' day stopped some of our mouths. Perhaps other presbyteries might follow with similar action."

We recommend both the approach and the document used in this instance as the basis of discussion and action. Beginning with "Presuppositions," the pamphlet continues with a section on "The International Order" which deals with: causes of the present disorder, the application of Christian principles, tasks in time of war, and the immediate task of the churches.

New Labor Temple—The movement for a Labor Temple, started several months ago by a group of Presbyterian ministers, in Cleveland promises to expand to an interdenominational community project. Several meetings of churchmen and labor officials have taken place. Rev. John Sommerlatte, pastor of the First Evangelical

and Reformed church, is acting chairman of the enlarged group of sponsors. Rev. Clem E. Binninger, of the Cleveland Heights Presbyterian church, has been actively engaged in this project and has written a report for us which will appear in the December issue of *SOCIAL PROGRESS*. Meanwhile, other presbytery committees may be encouraged by the friendly and cooperative attitude of this labor group.

Social Progress—We are glad to report real activity on the part of committee chairmen in securing wider distribution of *SOCIAL PROGRESS*. One chairman, writing for sample copies, says, "I like it and want to give it the attention it deserves." Some chairmen have sent in lists of ministers and others in the churches who will promote the magazine. We greatly value both the interest and the subscriptions received. Like effort on the part of every chairman would very soon enable us to enlarge the magazine and extend its usefulness.

Local Churches to Help Resettle Refugees

—At the request of the national agencies which are carrying on work in behalf of German refugees, both Christian and Jewish, the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America is now undertaking to enlist the cooperation of local churches in a plan for helping refugee families to find a self-respecting and self-supporting place in the life of American communities. The central idea is that a local church will accept a carefully defined responsibility for a specific refugee family that is to settle in the community where the church is located. Here is a suggestion for practical activity on the part of families, churches, or presbyteries. All necessary information may be secured by writing to Dr. Walter W. Van Kirk, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York.

That's an Idea!—A popular magazine tells of a place in which they stress good

*Federal Council of Churches, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York. 10 cents each; 15 for \$1.00.

citizenship among young people by holding annually a banquet and reception to all the young people in the community who have reached the age of twenty-one during that year. Why not suggest this plan to the chairmen or ministers in local churches?

Interracial Friendship—Social Education and Action Committees may find a suggestion in a recent effort of young people in a New York church to promote better understanding between Hebrews and Christians. The group held a joint discussion and worship service with young people of a local synagogue. Planned and conducted by representatives of both groups the worship service was followed by a discussion centered on two brief addresses. One address, given by a Jewish youth, was entitled, "The Jewish Problem as It Affects the Jew and What We as Jews Think the Christian Can Do About It." A Christian youth spoke on "The Jewish Problem as It Affects the Christian and What We as Christians Think the Jew Can Do About It."

What Is S. E. A.?—We have received exceedingly interesting reports from two S. E. A. committees: One, the committee's presentation at presbytery urging local church committees and discussing a program; the second, a report of a synod committee meeting with interesting results. We shall be glad to have others to report with these next month.

Calendar of Events

- Nov. 5-11—American Education Week.
- Nov. 5 or 12—Armistice Day Sunday.
- Nov. 6-12—Father and Son Week.
- Nov. 11—Armistice Day.
- Nov. 19—Men and Missions Sunday.
- Nov. 19—Stewardship Enrollment Sunday.
- Nov. 19 or 26—Thanksgiving Sunday.
- Nov. 23 or 30—Thanksgiving Day.
- Nov. 24-25—United Stewardship Council, (annual meeting) St. Louis, Mo.
- Dec. 10—Universal Bible Sunday.
- Dec. 24—Christmas Sunday.
- Dec. 25—Christmas Day.
- Dec. 31—New Year's Eve (Sunday).
- Jan. 1-7—Week of Prayer.
- Jan. 12-16—Home Missions Council and Council of Women for Home Missions (annual meeting), Indianapolis, Ind.
- Jan. 14—Interdenominational Home Missions Sunday.
- Jan. 28—Presbyterian Young People's Day.
- Feb. 4-10—International Council of Religious Education, Chicago.
- Feb. 7—Ash Wednesday.
- Feb. 7-March 24—Lenten Period.
- Feb. 9—World Day of Prayer for Missions.
- Feb. 11—Race Relations Sunday.
- Feb. 18—Day of Prayer for College Students.
- March 24—Easter.

Any books reviewed or otherwise mentioned in this issue of SOCIAL PROGRESS may be ordered from any Presbyterian Book Store.

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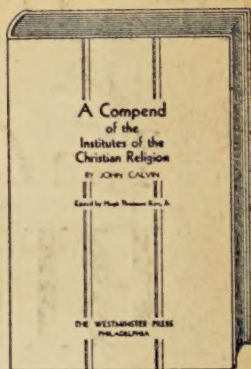
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